



Advising the Congress on Medicare issues

Consumer education campaigns

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Why is consumer education important to Medicare?

- The Commission has recommended many initiatives to improve Medicare and the health care delivery system
- Success of initiatives often depend on the attitudes and actions of beneficiaries
- To maximize the impact of health system initiatives, Medicare should engage beneficiaries in the process

Researchers studied 10 public health campaigns

- They found that campaigns can result in changes in individual behaviors
- But challenges are great
- Successful campaigns are part of wider movements targeting providers, policy makers, and the social environment
- Campaigns may take a long time before showing results

Behaviors targeted by public health campaigns

- Individual risk behaviors (e.g. overexposure to the sun)
- Participation in mass screening or immunization (e.g. cancer screening)
- Individual behavior with consequences for larger community (e.g. littering)
- Health care purchasing or decision-making (e.g. shared decision-making)

Campaigns must address multiple influences on individual behavior

- Policy makers must take into account targeted population's values, interpersonal relationships, and wider environment
- Example of Wisconsin antibiotic resistance network (WARN)

Campaigns may need to change over time to be effective

- Successful campaigns must be sustained over time and be culturally relevant
- Example of Keep America Beautiful anti-littering campaign

Campaign messages must connect to individuals

- Campaigns that target individual risk behaviors can develop messages showing how behavior can harm them
- Campaigns that target individual behaviors with social consequences have a harder time
- Example of WARN

Successful campaigns

- Should reach people at a teaching point when the targeted behavior is likely to take place
- Must develop messages that are actionable

Challenges to public health campaigns

- Campaigns may not be able to demonstrate effectiveness
- Campaigns have limited time on the public agenda and limited resources

Next steps

- Do you think we should address beneficiary education as it relates to specific initiatives or more broadly?
- Do you have suggestions for areas in which beneficiary perspectives would be most important?